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January 21, 2002

Attorney General John Ashcroft, DOJ
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530-0001

Dear Mr. Ashcroft,

I am appalled that the Microsoft antitrust case has gone on for this long. Three years have been spent already in the federal courts, and the possibility that even more time and money could be wasted in an extended court battle is outrageous. The push for continued litigation represents a pathetic attempt on the part of state legislatures to line their own pockets at Microsoft's expense. It is not in the best interest of the consumer for another round of proceedings to be brought against the Microsoft Corporation; indeed, the economy and the technology industry have been stagnating since the case began. The proposed settlement would not only prevent future antitrust violations, it would also allow Microsoft and the Department of Justice to get back to business. This is what the economy, the consumer, and the IT industry all need.

Microsoft and the Department of Justice were able last November, with the aid of a court-appointed mediator, to reach a settlement that was realistic as well as just. In the interest of wrapping up the case, Microsoft has agreed to conditions that extend to products and procedures not found to be unlawful by the Court of Appeals. Microsoft has, in fact, already made the necessary changes and is no longer in violation of antitrust laws. For example, Microsoft has agreed to refrain from taking retaliatory action should software developers or computer makers introduce software onto the market that directly competes with Microsoft products. Microsoft has also agreed to disclose various interfaces integral to the Windows operating system for use by its competitors. I cannot imagine that the Department of Justice will be able to find the agreement to be anything but fair.

The settlement needs no revision. Continued litigation is not in the best interest of the consumer. I do not believe that further action needs to be taken on the federal level. I urge you and your office to support the settlement.

Sincerely,



Michael Curtin

CC: Representative Chris Cannon